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Hundreds of veterans and other Northbrook residents turned out Monday to honor those who have died in the service of their country and to dedicate a new monument to all the residents, past and present, who have served in the Armed Forces.

Monday morning, local veterans, members of scouting troops and musicians from area schools marched along Cherry Lane and Church Street to Village Green Park for a short ceremony honoring those who have fallen in the line of duty.

Later in the day, they gathered for another ceremony at Freedom Park next to Village Hall, during which a howitzer that once graced the lawn of the now-closed George W. Benjamin Post 791 hall was dedicated.

A bronze plaque displayed with the howitzer reads: "In the face of war, let us pursue peace. In peace, let us remember the sacrifices made in war. Your service will not be forgotten."

"We thank those who participated and the community at large because both events were very well attended," Post Commander Robert Jaeger said Tuesday.

Jaeger said the post Monday announced plans to pay for a bronze plaque at Glenbrook North High School to honor the Northbrook high school's alumni who have lost their lives in military service. And the group intends to pay to renovate a Northbrook Park District athletic field that then will be renamed American Legion Field, he said.

U.S. Rep. Mark Kirk, R-10th, spoke at the howitzer's dedication. "This symbol will help us to thank the thousands of Northbrook veterans who wore the uniform and put their lives on the line for our country," Kirk said.

Kirk also talked about a \$100 million expansion of the Veterans Administration Hospital in North Chicago, part of a federal budget package he has supported.

Village President Gene Marks also spoke at the dedication of the memorial.

On Tuesday, he said his remarks focused on the memorial's true purpose of honoring veterans. He said that idea was misunderstood by many of those who fought the weapon's placement next to Village Hall.

"The community overwhelmingly came out and said this is very nice to honor our service people and in a way it also honors the police and firemen, many of those who protect us on a daily basis. It's never been about pro-war. It's strictly about honoring the men and women who have served," Marks said.